

**Remarks**

Applicant thanks the Examiner for his careful consideration of the application.

Claims 1-27 are pending in the application.

**Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102**

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 5-8, 12-19, 22-23 and 25-27 under 35 USC § 102(e) as being anticipated by Jones et al (US Patent No. 6,530,655) ("Jones"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

In claim 1, Applicant recites a drip plate for use in a phase change ink jet printer using solid ink. The drip plate includes a plate having a first surface and an opposing second surface. The plate has a substantially planar upper portion and a substantially planar lower pointed portion. Only the first surface of the upper portion of the plate directly contacts ink sticks and the lower portion is not coplanar with the upper portion.

The Examiner should allow claim 1 as amended. Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly recite Applicant's intent. Specifically, the first surface of the substantially planar upper portion of the drip plate has been defined as being the only portion that directly contacts ink sticks. Primarily, while the element cited by the Examiner as corresponding to the upper portion appears to have first and second surfaces, it appears that both the first and second surfaces would contact ink sticks based upon the disclosure of Jones. Therefore, the Examiner has yet to show that Jones anticipates claim 1 as amended.

Claims 3, 6 – 8, and 12 – 15, should be allowed if claims 1 and 16 are allowed as claims 3, 6 – 8, and 12 – 15 depend from claim 1.

In claim 16, Applicant recites an ink loader for a phase change ink printer. The ink loader includes at least one channel having an entry end and an exit end and a melt assembly. The melt assembly includes a drip plate, a melt plate fastened to the upper first side of the drip plate, and a heating device thermally connected to one of the melt plate and the drip plate. The drip plate includes an upper portion having substantially flat upper first and second sides and a lower pointed portion having substantially flat lower first and second

sides that is not coplanar with the upper portion. The first side of the upper portion faces oncoming ink sticks.

The Examiner should allow claim 16 as amended. Claim 16 has been amended to clarify that the melt plate attaches to the side of the drip plate that contacts ink sticks. The element cited by the Examiner as corresponding to a melt plate in Jones appears to only attach to the side of the drip plate facing away from incoming ink sticks. Therefore, the Examiner has yet to show that Jones anticipates claim 16 as amended.

Claims 17 – 19, 23, and 26-27 should be allowed if claims 1 and 16 are allowed as claims 17 – 19, 23, and 26 – 27 depend from claim 16.

#### **Claim Rejections – 35 USC § 103**

The Examiner rejected claims 4 and 24 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones in view of Alavizadeh et al (US Patent No. 5,424,767) ("Alavizadeh"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

The Examiner should allow claims 4 and 24 if claims 1 and 16 are allowed as claims 4 and 24 depend from claims 1 and 16 and include all the limitations of claims 1 and 16, respectively.

The Examiner rejected claims 9 and 20 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones in view of Scheuhing (US Patent No. 5,832,835) ("Scheuhing"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

The Examiner should allow claims 9 and 20 if claims 1 and 16 are allowed as claims 9 and 20 depend from claims 1 and 16 and include all the limitations of claims 1 and 16, respectively.

The Examiner rejected claims 10 and 21 under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones in view of Scheuhing, as applied to claims 9 and 20 above and further in view of Gragg et al (US Pat 5,467,118) ("Gragg"). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

The Examiner should allow claims 10 and 21 if claims 1 and 16 are allowed as claims 10 and 21 depend from claims 1 and 16 and include all the limitations of claims 1 and 16, respectively.

**Allowable Subject Matter**

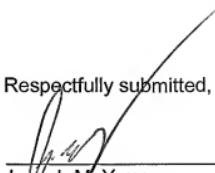
The Examiner objected to claim 11 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has foregone amending claim 11 as Applicant has amended claim 1 to overcome the Examiner's rejection. If claim 1 is allowed, claim 11 should be allowed.

**Conclusion**

No additional fee is believed to be required for this amendment. However, the undersigned Xerox Corporation attorney hereby authorizes the charging of any necessary fees, other than the issue fee, to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025. This also constitutes a request for any needed extension of time and authorization to charge all fees therefor to Xerox Corporation Deposit Account No. 24-0025.

A telephone interview is respectfully requested at the number listed below prior to any further Office Action, i.e., if the Examiner has any remaining questions or issues to address after this paper. The undersigned will be happy to discuss any further Examiner-proposed amendments as may be appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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